

JUL 24 2007

Serial No.: 10/729,091
Examiner: Daniel L. HoangREMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 remain in this application. Claim 10 has been amended.

Claim Rejections35 USC § 112

Claims 3-5, 8 and 10 were rejected under 35 USC § 112.

Claim 3:

The Examiner rejected claim 3 because the Examiner believes that "said encryption selector accesses the index maintained at said encryption selection database" was not described in the specification in such a way to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Support for such a limitation can be found at least in: Fig. 1, p.5 lines 5-7 and 14-22, and p.9 lines 23-31 to p. 10 lines 1-2.

Claim 4:

The Examiner rejected claim 4 because the Examiner believes that "indicia associated with the originating node indexed together with values" was not described in the specification in such a way to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The Examiner also stated that it is unclear which values are being indexed with the indicia.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Support for such a limitation can be found at least in: p. 10 lines 1-2, p.1 lines 7-10, and p. 4 lines 9-13. As can be seen, "the rules contained at the index 48 of the database are indexed together with some indicia associated with the message."

Claim 5:

The Examiner rejected claim 5 because the Examiner believes that "indicia associated with the identifier indexed together with values" was not described in the specification in such a way to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly

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connected, to make and/or use the invention. The Examiner also stated that it is unclear which values are being indexed with the indicia.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Support for such a limitation can be found at least in: p. 10 lines 1-2, p.1 lines 7-10, p. 4 lines 9-13, and p.5 lines 7-27. As can be seen, "a portion of the signaling message that are to be encrypted" are indexed together with some indicia associated with the message.

Claim 8:

The Examiner rejected claim 8 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claim cites the limitation "MTP3" and "AP." It is unclear to the Examiner what these acronyms refer to

Claim 8 claims the apparatus of claim 7 wherein the payload part of the message signaling unit forming the signaling message that said encryptor selectably encrypts comprises at least a selected one of an MTP3 part and an AP part, and wherein said encryption selector selects, if any, at least one of the MTP3 part and the AP part of the message signaling unit.

The specification on p. 6, lines 3-6 states, "When implemented in an SS7 signaling network, portions of a payload part of an MSU is selectably encrypted according to a rules-based selection process. MTP3 portions, AP portions, both, neither, or other portions of the payload part of the MSU are encrypted according to selection responsive to the rules-based selection procedure."

It is known in the art that MTP stands for Message Transfer Part which is a protocol in SS7 that transfers signal messages and performs associated functions, such as error control and signaling link security. MTP has two parts, MTP level 2 (MTP2) and level 3 (MTP3), that performs functions at the layer 2 and 3 respectively as specified in the OSI 7 layers model.

It is known in the art that AP stands for Application Part. For example, messages from a user and from an Application Part of an SS7 node are passed to the MTP which packages and delivers them across the network.

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Claim 10:

The Examiner stated that there is insufficient antecedent basis for "the second selected switch node." Applicant has amended the limitation to say "the second selected signal point" per the Examiner's suggestion.

Per the remarks provided above, Applicant respectfully believes that claims 3-5, 8 and 10 now overcome the 35 USC § 112 rejections.

35 USC § 103

Claims 1-3, 6-7, 9-20 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (5,974,052), in view of Blanchard (6,081,600), and further in view of Kollmyer (7,165,175).

Independent claim 1 (and predominantly claim 16) discloses: In a signaling network in which signaling messages are communicated between signaling points of the signaling network, an improvement of apparatus for selectably encoding at least portions of a signaling message communicated by way of a first selected signal point to at least a second selected signal point, said apparatus comprising:

an encryption selector operable responsive to delivery of the signaling message at the first selected signal point, said encryption selector for selecting which, if any, portion of the signaling message to encrypt; and

an encryptor adapted to receive indications of the signaling message and to receive indications of selection made by said encryption selector, said encryptor selectably for encrypting the portion of the signaling message selected by said encryption selector to be encrypted, the signaling message thereafter to be forwarded on to the second selected signaling point.

The Examiner rejected claim 1, in part, by stating, "Blanchard teaches data packets that contain a message payload...which contains message content which further comprises signaling data and traffic data." However, currently pending claim 1 discloses selecting a signaling message and encrypting a portion of the selected signaling message. Blanchard, on the other

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hand, discloses encrypting signaling messages and traffic messages at separate network processing nodes (see col. 2, lines 51-57). As can be seen, Blanchard does not disclose encrypting a portion of a *signaling* message but rather discloses separating a signaling message and a traffic message and encrypting the entire *signaling* message or the entire traffic message.

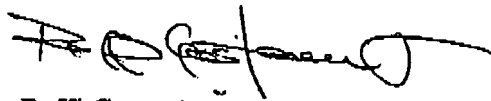
The Examiner rejected claim 1, in part, by stating, "Kollmyer teaches a system that is operable to parse and selectively encrypt and decrypt encrypted data (see col. 5, paragraph 2). Such a reference in Kollmyer discloses, "encrypt[ing] only the payload portion of the data, leaving the non-payload portion intact..." The present invention, on the other hand, discloses, "encrypt[ing] a **portion of a payload** part of the message" (see p. 4, lines 2-3 of the present invention). As can be seen, Kollmyer does not disclose encrypting a portion of a *signaling* message (or a portion of a payload) but rather discloses encrypting the entire payload.

Per the remarks provided above, Applicant respectfully believes that independent claims 1 and 16, as well as the claims that depend from them are in condition for allowance and respectfully request they be passed to allowance. Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned to expeditiously resolve any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

ALCATEL LUCENT

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